(c) the time by which a decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). A proposal submitted by the Government of U.P. for system improvement scheme at Moradabad has already been approved under the 'Crucial Balancing Investment Scheme' in which Central Government's contribution is of Rs. 8 crores. The total project is estimated to be Rs. 12.41 crores. The project is to be executed by the U.P. State Electricity Board for which the State Govt. has already formed a Committee to oversee the implementation. On the basis of the proposal received from the Government of U.P., the Ministry of Commerce has also approved the establishment of Export Promotion Industrial Park (EPIP) at Surajpur-Kasna, District Ghaziabad. The Park is under development.

[English]

Indo-Russian Talk on Direct Taxes

1267. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the outcome of the fourth round of Indo-Russian talks on direct tax issues held in Moscow in October last; and

(b) the efforts made by India in to ensure that a treaty is emerged out of these talks?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The fourth round of Indo-Russian talks was held in Moscow from 15th to 18th October, 1996 for finalisation of a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement between India and the Russian Federation. The talks were held in a very friendly and cordial atmosphere and certain issues which required further consideration were discussed and settled amicably during this final round of negotiations. The Agreement has thus been initialed at the official level as a result of the said discussions and further steps are being taken for its formal signing soon.

Rubber Plantation in Non-Traditional Areas

1268. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR :
SHRI N. DENNIS :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme to encourage plantation particularly rubber plantation in the non-traditional areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the total area of land proposed to be covered under this scheme; and

(c) the total fund allocated for this purpose during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). A Statement is enclosed.

STATEMENT

Details of schemes to encourage plantations including rubber plantations in the non-traditional areas

Rubber :

During 1995-96 an area of 2092.13 hectare was planted in the non-traditional areas and during 1996-97, the target is 3570 hectare. Rubber Board is implementing the following schemes for the development of rubber plantations in the non-traditional areas.

(1) Rubber Plantation Development Scheme provides a financial assistance of Rs. 8,000 per ha and reimbursement of Planting material at Rs. 3,000 per ha. For SC/ST categories, the reimbursement is at Rs. 4,000 per ha.

(2) Boundary protection scheme provides assistance at Rs. 1,500 per ha. For SC/ST categories, it is Rs. 4,000 per ha.

(3) Supply of fertilizers at 50% subsidised cost during the first four years of planting to SC/ST growers.

(4) Assistance for irrigation at Rs. 5,000 per ha.

(5) Assistance for setting up community processing centre.

(6) Other schemes, such as distribution of planting materials, block plantation for tribals and SC training, setting up demonstration plots, setting up District Development Centres for imparting training to growers and other personnel involved in plantation management. In Tripura, a Tribal Development Plan is implemented with the assistance of the Govt. of Tripura and World Bank.

The amount spent on the development of rubber plantation in the non-traditional regions during the last three years are as under :

1993-94	Rs. 570.26 lakh
1994-95	Rs. 592.84 lakh
1995-96	Rs. 620.97 lakh

Coffee :

Several specific Plan and Non-Plan Projects are being operated in the Non-traditional areas during the VIII Plan period with an objective to provide Extension,

Research, Development Credit, Finance and other support. These specific projects include, Extension offices in Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Assam, a Regional office at Vizag, two coffee demonstration farms established at Koraput (Orissa) and Haflong (Assam), a Regional Coffee Research Station in Andhra Pradesh to cater to the research needs of the Zone, five coffee demonstration farms in the North Eastern region (Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur) and a Regional Research Station at Diphu in Assam to cater to the research needs of the North Eastern Zone and training of personnel in the North Eastern Region.

The area under coffee in Non-traditional areas is around 22,016 ha. During VIII Plan, the target is to expand coffee plantation in 5,000 ha in non-traditional areas.

The amount spent on the development of coffee plantation in the Non-traditional areas during the last three years are as under :

1993-94	Rs. 108.70 lakh
1994-95	Rs. 109.56 lakh
1995-96	Rs. 137.84 lakh

Tea :

New Tea Unit Financing Scheme is being operated to encourage tea plantations in the non-traditional areas. Under this scheme, loan at the rate of Rs. 63,200 per ha and subsidy at the rate of Rs. 37,900 per ha is provided for setting up of new tea plantations in the non-traditional areas. The total area planted under tea in non-traditional region is 2664.52 ha. In addition to this, 11 fresh proposals have been received from various State Governments in the non traditional areas for planting tea in 3557.59 ha.

The amount spent on the development of tea plantations in the non-traditional areas during the last three years are as under :

1993-94	Rs. 354.8 lakh
1994-95	Rs. 227.01 lakh
1995-96	Rs. 325.5 lakh

Participation of Financial Institutions in Public Sector

1269. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the norms being followed by the Government to ensure the participation of various Government financial institutions in the public issues;

(b) whether pressure is being exerted on Government financial institutions particularly Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India to participate in some public issues of the Companies;

(c) if so, the details of these companies;

(d) whether the Government have received complaints during the last three years regarding pressurising of Government Financial Institutions to participate in various public issues;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Government have not prescribed any norms for participation of financial institutions (FIs) in public issues. The Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has reported that decision to participate in public issues of companies is based on the financial, economic, commercial viability and technical feasibility of the projects being implemented by them.

(b) No, Sir. The Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India Ltd. (ICICI) which is a public financial institution has reported that the underwriting and direct subscription assistance are sanctioned by ICICI based on its perception of the viability of the project and the risks involved, which are again based on its appraisal of the project.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f). Do not arise.

Problems of Exporters

1270. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the exporters are facing a number of problems under the existing pass book scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to redress the problem of exporters and to achieve the target of exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The main problems relate to valuation for credit under the passbook scheme, delay in grant of credit, limited operation of passbook scheme from specified ports, and imposition of special duty of customs on imports made under passbook scheme, all of which are under the active consideration of Deptt. of Revenue.

(c) Ministry of Commerce is in constant touch with the apex Chambers of Commerce to seek their views on the problems faced by the passbook holder. Wherever necessary, the matter has been taken up with the Customs and Central Excise authorities and necessary amendments/modifications have been made by notification/public notices/circulars.